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ABSTRACT

Noting that the process of writing textbooks has seldom been studied, this paper offers a process-product model that relies on a systems analysis of the textbook universe (or megasystem) to provide insight into the textbook writing process. The model presented discloses the interaction of a number of boundaried but interdependent "peer systems," including the family system, the government system, the knowledge production system, the educational delivery system, and the knowledge distribution system. The paper notes that smaller, but nonetheless influential "satellite systems" affect the system as well, such as religious bodies, parent organizations, teachers' organizations, and self-constituted textbook critics. The paper next points out how perplexing perturbations in the family and government systems arose in 1986 and 1987 when parents brought suit against two school boards in Tennessee and Alabama about textbook content. A process-product analysis of the evolution of the textbook from blank page to manuscript page is presented next, followed by a description of the relationship between textbook writing and the knowledge production system (colleges and universities). Discussions of motivations of textbook authors, such as the opportunity for creativity and intellectual challenge, and the mission of textbook writing, are the topics of the final two sections of the paper. A table presenting a taxonomy of the peer and satellite systems in the ecology of education and 60 references conclude the paper. (SKC)

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WRITING A TEXTBOOK: FROM THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE TO TACIT KNOWLEDGE -- AND BACK AGAIN!

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Textbooks are a reality, but it is a reality shrouded by myth. One might even say that there is a "mystique" surrounding the textbook as a reality that many researchers are ill-equipped to penetrate. Researchers and textbook critics alike approach the textbook as a "given," without either a theoretical foundation or tacit knowledge of the textbook world. Those who advocate textbook "improvement" are often naive, assuming that only textbook publishers are responsible for textbook quality. This paper is written from the vantage point of over twenty years' experience as a textbook editor, textbook consultant, and textbook writer and author. Since August 1986, when this Symposium was first proposed, two textbooks -- *Resources for Living* and *Lifeplans* (for which I served as senior author) have been published. A third textbook, with the working title *Skills for Living*, was contracted for, and the first draft of the manuscript was due on March 15, 1987. Thus there was a significant period of overlap during which I was at work both on a textbook manuscript and a scholarly paper on the very process in which I was engaged. The opportunity for reflection and reporting was optimal.

Paper presented at a Symposium, "Textbook Writing: The Ideal and the Real," sponsored by the SIG Textbooks, Textbook Publishing, and Schools at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Washington, D. C., April 20-24, 1987.

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Textbook Theory: A Process-Product Model

My theoretical view of the textbook in the ecology of education has been reported earlier (Thompson, 1982a; 1982b). Its process-product model relies on a systems analysis of the textbook universe, or metasystem. Systems analysis discloses a number of boundaried but interdependent "peer systems," including the family system, the government system, the knowledge production system, the educational delivery system, and the knowledge distribution system. Systems analysis discloses the primary purpose of each system as well as its primary envirnoment and identifies the inputs, processes, and outputs that typically occur in relation to the system. These are summarized in Table 1. Each system has a different relationship to the textbook and its role in the ecology of education. A number of smaller, but nonetheless influential, "satellite systems" affect the system as well. Among these are organized religious bodies, parent organizations, teachers' organizations, and such self-constituted textbook critics as Mel and Norma Gabler from Longview, Texas. Satellite systems are comparatively ephemeral and may arise at any time. The peer systems, by contrast, are relatively long-standing. At any point in time, the system will follow the same general configuration, but the processes occurring will change and will affect the product, namely the textbook, to a greater or lesser degree.

The family system "outputs" the children who enter the schools, the primary institutions in the knowledge delivery system. The sites of research, scholarly inquiry, and scientific and technical development comprise the knowledge production system. Once knowledge is produced or created, it is disseminated or diffused through the knowledge distribution

system, sometimes (but not always) for profit. The publishing industry, which has also been called the "knowledge industry," is that part of the knowledge distribution system responsible for producing textbooks, textbook peripherals, and other educational materials. For those who do not see the system as a whole, the textbook publishing sector of the knowledge distribution system is the most obvious target for displeasure with the product. It becomes a scapegoat for the failures of the educational system. A systems analysis of the textbook metasystem challenges this untested assumption.

The systems perspective permits a more objective view of the totality of events that drives the market demand for textbooks. Peer and satellite systems generate perturbations in the system that disturb its always fragile equilibrium. These perturbations can be schematized as inputs, processes (throughputs), outputs, and feedback loops. Feedback may carry positive or negative information. The ecological model predicts that a change in one part of the system will have an effect on other parts of the system. It belies a simplistic cause-and-effect analysis of the system in favor of a systems analysis.

While writing my textbook manuscript draft and this paper, some major perturbations occurred in the family and government systems. Parents brought suit against two school boards in Tennessee and Alabama. As a textbook author and a university professor, I am part of both the knowledge production system (as a researcher/theorist) and of the knowledge distribution system (as a paper presenter, author of scholarly papers, and also as an author of junior and senior high school and college textbooks). Researching and teaching occur in the same primary environment -- the university. But they are part of two different systems

with two different goals. As a teacher, I am part of the educational delivery system. As a citizen and taxpayer, as well as a state-city employee, I share in the government system. As a parent, I am a member of the family system.

The Tennessee Textbook Case: October 1986

In October 1986, Judge Thomas Hull ruled in the case of *Mozert vs. Hawkins County Public Schools, et al.* that the Hawkins County school district had violated the civil rights of parents whose children were required to read textbooks in the Holt, Rinehart, and Winston reading series. The families interpreted the content as "anti-Christian." Among the topics parents found objectionable were evolution, feminism, humanism, and witchcraft. In December 1986, Judge Hall awarded the parents damages in the amount of $50,521.59 for their out-of-pocket expenses in arranging alternative reading instruction for their children under the "opt-out" provisions of Tennessee's education law. In his ruling, Judge Hall wrote:

> The problem with the Holt series, as it relates to the plaintiffs' beliefs, is one of degree. One story reinforces and builds upon the others throughout the individual texts and the series as a whole. The plaintiffs believe that, after reading the entire Holt series, a child might adopt the views of a feminist, a humanist, a pacifist, an anti-Christian, a vegetarian, or an advocate of a "one world government."
>
> Plaintiffs sincerely believe that the repetitive affirmation of these philosophical viewpoints is repulsive to the Christian faith -- so repulsive that they must not allow their children to be exposed to the Holt series. This is their religious belief. (p. 12)

The plaintiffs in the Tennessee case were upheld in their contention that they should not be forced to choose between reading texts that offend their religious beliefs and a free public education. From a historical perspective, it must be noted that textbooks evolved from the "Bible as

text," and the secular textbook is a product of many forces operating in the educational metasystem. From a theoretical perspective, the view of the legal system and the view of the family system are congruent. The legal decision in *Mozert* became an input to both the educational delivery system and the knowledge distribution system. Schools and textbook publishers both responded to the input in predictable ways. They inputted the new information and sought ways to re-establish system equilibrium.

The Buffalo Case: November 1986

In November 1986, a perturbation occurred in the educational delivery system which had direct relevance for the production of Home Economics textbooks in the knowledge distribution system. A member of the Buffalo Board of Education moved that the Home Economics text *Family Matters: Concepts in Marriage and Personal Relationships* and its accompanying teachers' guide not be included in the approved textbook list until the Board could determine whether the materials advanced "secular humanism." The passage that caught the Board member's attention appeared in the teachers' guide, which stated "Humanists such as [Abraham] Maslow, believe that learning happens because humans are born with an innate curiosity about their environment; by nature we are learners" (Edwords, p. 23). He was further concerned about references to the theories of Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson, and Freud. Contemporary educational theory would be incomplete without references to these influential ideas, and it is hard to see how any discussion of human development could be presented without acknowledging their existence. Since these theorists had been described as "humanists," and the Board member knew that some parents regard humanism as a religion, he challenged the inclusion of those references in the text when the words of

Jeremiah, Mark, Luke, and John were not.

The Board heard some seventy speakers testify as to the offenses of the textbook. Significantly, no feminist group was identified. The discussion was emotion-laden. Eight high school students (who did not agree on the content of the text) presented thoughtful testimony. Their unanimous view was that censorship of school textbooks was a dangerous precedent. The Board's final vote permitted inclusion of the text and its teachers' guide on the approved textbook list.

One of the students quoted textbook critics Mel and Norma Gabler as saying, "Textbooks that encourage students to come to their own conclusions aren't fair to our children" (Edwords, p. 26). The students also noted that none of the text's detractors had actually read the book to support their claims that it glorified sex, drugs, atheism, and criminal activities as examples of secular humanism. One student said:

> I implore you, the elected members of this community, to act as a board of *education* and not as a board of moral, political, and religious *indoctrination* (Edwords, p. 34)

Testimony such as that by a group of Buffalo high school students gives a textbook writer pause -- and at the same time, hope! Nevertheless, how often can we expect students to rally to the textbook's defense?

The Alabama Case: March 1987

In *Smith vs. Board of School Commissioners of Mobile County*, Home Economics textbooks on the approved list were cited (together with history and social studies texts) as advancing secular humanism. The case had a connection to an earlier "school prayer" case, also decided by Judge W. Brevard Hand, the judge in *Smith*. While beyond the scope of this paper to address the validity of this argument, it must be noted that "secular humanism" is the only religion to have been constituted a religion by its

opponents rather than by its adherents.

One expert witness for the plaintiffs, Dr. William R. Coulson, a professor of psychology and education, complained that Home Economics textbooks "taught individual responsibility for decision-making instead of teaching absolute rights and wrongs." He is quoted as saying:

> From a Bible-believing perspective, that's not true, saying you can only make your own choice. Where do they get off teaching that? As I see it as a Roman Catholic, God gave children parents to protect them from -- among other things -- their own instincts. (Clendinen, p. A14)

Such language cannot be ignored by a textbook writer who recognizes that that there are alternative approaches to human development that can be attributed to differences in family values and other cultural factors in the environment.

Does Home Economics have a humanist agenda, and do home economists follow a humanist agenda in writing textbooks? Such a cause-effect model of textbook writing minimalizes the complexity of the textbook-making enterprise in the ecology of education.

The decision by Judge Hand ruled that secular humanism is a religious belief system, not a mere scientific methodology. Such a decision colors the textbook metasystem for a considerable period of time -- much as the ash from the eruption of a volcano clouds the atmosphere for an extended period. William A. Bradford, Jr., a Washington lawyer who donated his services in the Alabama case, said that "bad history is not a constitutional violation" (Clendenin, p. B20).

In the *Smith* case, Judge Hand wrote:

> According to the plaintiffs' experts, the five home economics books espouse humanistic psychology or education. Humanistic education is an application of humanism. Not all adherents to the latter agree with every aspect of the former, and Dr. Kurtz spent considerable time on the stand denying that he personally

> adheres to certain teachings of humanistic psychology. This, however, does not show that humanistic psychology as present in these books is not a variety of humanism or a religion in its own right under the first amendment. (p. 106)

John Buchanan, a former Alabama congressman and head of People for the American Way, which had supported the defendants, called the order by Judge Hand a case of "judicial book burning" (Gest, p. 29).

Push-Pull: Constitutional Protections and Prohibitions

First Amendment cases generate unique push-pull forces throughout the educational metasystem, and they affect (input) the peer and satellite systems with different effects (outputs). The Alabama decision was appealed almost immediately but, in the meantime, as some observers noted, it provides the judicial book burners with a "two-year supply of matches."

William Raspberry, a Washington-based syndicated columnist, had this to say:

> Judge Hand, who earlier had ruled in favor of classroom prayers, only to be overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court, has not so much settled a controversy as opened a string of potential new ones. Are advocates of vegetarianism, humanism, environmentalism and transcendental meditation also members of a religion? And if so, will they, under his ruling, be allowed to treat their homes (since they don't have churches) as religious institutions eligible for the same tax considerations as churches? (p. 3)

In 1984, Secretary of Education T. H. Bell accused publishers of "dumbing down" their products to accommodate students at the "bottom of the class." It has always been easy to take potshots at publishers and ignore the rest of the system. A systems view avoids singling out textbook publishers and making them the sole scapegoats for the poor quality of textbooks (Thompson, 1984b).

In one writer's view:

> liberal watchdogs say fundamentalists are escalating their efforts to censor textbooks, library books and school curricula around the country. Increasingly, the targets are classroom discussions of such things as career options, value systems, suicide -- *even home economics.* (Emphasis added. Beck, p. 20)

For a Home Economics textbook writer, it seems astonishing to find these texts categorized as offensive. Most people have criticized Home Economics texts for being vapid and innocuous, hardly subversive. Feminists argue that they are offensive because they promote traditional sex roles.

Over the years, curriculum efforts in Home Economics have focused on decision-making as the central skill in personal and resource management. Home Economics has turned away from prescriptive rule-making as inappropriate in a pluralistic society. Most teachers acknowledge the influence of family-, peer-, and society-based values in influencing choice. Finding Home Economics textbooks in the company of political science textbooks (history and social studies) would surprise many feminists. For example, in November 1986 (even as the Buffalo students were speaking out against censorship) Barbara Ehrenreich, a regular contributor to *Mother Jones* , *Ms.* and *Dissent* , disparaged Home Economics. In a mocking article, she charged Home Economics with advocating such "traditional" feminine activities as "Sock Ironing" and "Football Appreciation" (Ehrenreich, p. 6). Perhaps the time has come for Home Economics to be taken seriously by feminists. From my point of view, Home Economics textbooks represent one of the best vehicles for the dissemination of the new scholarship on women, and I have tried to do this in my books.

According to Ted Gest:

> Many complaints are reactions to a modernization of schoolbooks over the last decade. Mirroring changes in society,

> authors have replaced housewives with female engineers and doctors .... Some of the changes offend traditionalists, who insist that books have strayed too far from majority views. (p. 29)

In Gest's view, authors are "keeping a low profile, making modest alterations to satisfy their clients -- boards in 22 states that set textbook policies and individual school districts in theirs" (p. 11). While it is true that the Tennessee and Alabama decisions represent a perturbation in the system -- a "market force" -- that impacts directly on the knowledge distribution system (publishers), I can state categorically that this textbook author was going about "business as usual" with no high signs from her publisher. I had to process the information and consider its significance for what I was doing, but it did not represent a major intervention in the process. Later, when the manuscript is in the hands of the publisher's editors, some statements may be found offensive, and that may become a subject for negotiation under the terms of my contract. The extent to which an author retains control over any work is provided for in the contractual agreement with a publisher.

Bob Davis, a staff reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, observed:

> In many ways, textbook publishing is like any other consumer-products industry. For example, textbooks are designed and packaged to be eye-catching, and they are tested to meet performance standards. What is different is that because they shape lives and understandings, they are critiqued more than most consumer products. Feminists lobby school boards about textbooks; so do fundamentalists, minority groups and activists of all stripes. Parents and school officials also have their say. (p. 1)

From a theoretical perspective, satellite system outputs and output from the government and educational delivery peer systems are interacting at high-intensity levels of perturbation.

A major problem in the testimony taken at the Tennessee and Alabama

"textbook trials" was the conspicuous absence of any expert witness who might be considered an "authority" on the textbook itself. There were authorities on psychology, education, and theology, but not one expert was identified as having done research on the textbook. Way (1983) makes the case for content analysis as a research technique appropriate for uncovering subtle messages in Home Economics education. There was no input to the case from the knowledge production system, hence no expert who could speak on behalf of the text *qua* text. Further, no one was called as an expert in the content analysis of Home Economics texts. There was no research and no theory cited concerning the role and function of the textbook in the ecology of education. There were no challenges to the plaintiffs' implicit assumptions about what a text is supposed to do, how it is organized, and how it is used in the classroom. By moving away from the text as classroom "Bible," textbooks have apparently gone too far in their stance of neutrality. Their efforts at neutrality are now characterized as a set of prescriptions promoting the dogma of "secular humanism."

Clearly, the perturbations in the textbook universe were sending conflicting messages to this writer during the period that the *Skills for Living* manuscript was in preparation.

Writing a Textbook

The evolution of a textbook from blank page to manuscript page, from manuscript page to edited page, from edited page to printed page, and from printed page to a text in classroom use is a unique and perilous journey. The process-product model factors in a vast array of inputs from peer and satellite systems in the metasystem to the knowledge distribution system that produces textbooks.

The metaphor of "birth" for a textbook is not inappropriate, except that the process in question takes more than nine months! In the case of *Resources for Living*, the manuscript and galleys passed (through mergers and acquisitions) through three publishing "houses" before finding a permanent (and happy) "home"! However, numerous influences intervene -- from the first "gleam" in the parent's eye to the delivery of the final product -- that are more reminiscent of modern reproductive technologies than of "natural" childbirth.

Where do ideas originate? How are ideas incorporated in written and iconic symbols? What is the ideological message -- either implicit or explicit -- of a text? Is the ideological content deliberate or is it solely in the eye of the beholder? How are ideas communicated? How are ideologies perpetuated? How are ideas and ideologies integrated in the conceptual frameworks that students develop in their private life and in their public life at school? How do teachers interject their own ideas to neutralize, modify, or reinforce the content of textbooks? Research findings are not yet sufficiently fine-tuned to make textbook writing a science rather than an art. When sufficient research is available, it needs to be integrated in the the kind of metatheoretical model I have proposed. It would then be made useful for future "textbook cases."

The relation of "parent" to "product" is prescribed by the contract signed by the author and the publisher. One is promising to deliver a "child" at some future date to a waiting "home." A separate paper could be written (and should be) on the variety of contracts offered by textbook publishers to writers and authors. In everyday language, "writer" and "author" would seem to be synonyms. Copyright law distinguishes "authors" from "writers for hire" who perform their writing tasks at the

publisher's bidding -- something like surrogate mothers. In the course of product development, a number of interlocking roles can be differentiated. The role of the author can be distinguished from that of the writer. Ideas come from the minds of authors. They are sometimes executed by writers. Authors, writers, consultants, and editors all make different contributions to the written text at different times. They must -- ultimately -- be woven together by someone who is held accountable, either an author or a publisher's editor.

As I see it, the responsibility of the textbook author is first to the discipline as she/he understands it, second to the most recent knowledge available in the discipline, and then fidelity to the craft of teaching through text. By that I mean a conscious awareness that at the "other side" of the text are the student and the teacher, and sometimes the parents.

Textbook Writing and the Knowledge Production System

A curious paradox exists in the knowledge production system, especially that part of the system known as colleges and universities. In my model, knowledge creation, knowledge distribution, and educational delivery are differentiated systemically. In 1955, sociologist Robert Bierstedt, a co-author of the *Cronbach Report*, noted that textbooks rank low in the academic scale of values. An academic is expected to contribute to knowledge. Textbooks are not perceived as contributions to knowledge but merely as channels for knowledge delivery. The art and craft of synthesizing knowledge is never acknowledged as requiring a significant intellectual effort. Prestige within the academic profession and the rewards (promotion and tenure) in the knowledge production system attach to the acquisition of old knowledge and the creation of new

knowledge. Although teaching occurs in the same setting, it is not part of the same system. The diffusion and dissemination of knowledge (except in "peer reviewed" publications) is not valued. This places the author of a text in an ambivalent position. She/he has produced in a profession in which "to produce" is an intransitive word -- but he/she has not "contributed" (Cronbach and Bierstedt, p. 124). That negative perception was communicated to me by President Leonard Lief of Lehman College when he commented negatively on my textbook writing (without mentioning its relation to my textbook scholarship) and denied my appeal to be promoted to full professor after a negative vote by a faculty committee. He wrote:

> The books, *Resources for Living* and *Lifeplans* are texts directed to junior high school and high school students respectively. They combine popularizations of psychological theory with directives for everyday living, but cannot be considered as scholarly works. (p. 1)

A basic flaw in Lief's logic stems from his failure to recognize the textbook as a unique genre. Plays cannot be judged by the critical canons of science. Nor can poems be judged by the same standards as plays. A faculty member whose oeuvre consisted of photo-essays received promotion, although this genre is not strictly speaking "scholarly" either. However, the notion of the text as art form has yet to be pursued, even by the genre's most ardent defenders. I think textbook writing is a unique blend of scholarship and art, not unlike the art of teaching. One way to address the lack of academic respectability for textbook writing would be for the SIG sponsoring this Symposium to consider making a "Textbook of the Year" award! A writer can dream! Another approach is to apply the systems model in analyzing the problem. For example, the academic operates in two different systems that co-exist in the same

"commonsense" environment. She/he has a role in the knowledge production system when doing scholarly work. By the same token, he/she has a role in the educational delivery system when he/she is teaching or writing textbooks. Each system has a different goal. Scholarly writing is an extension of the scholar's role. Textbook writing is an extension of the teacher's role. The same person functions differently in each role. However, students who are badly educated in elementary and secondary schools (where textbook teaching is still important) are inputs to the postsecondary schools where college teachers bemoan their students' lack of preparation. Thus, for students to learn effectively, the skills of the master teacher must be incorporated in text materials.

In the taxonomy on Table 1, scholarship is a goal of the knowledge production system. Scholarly research is communicated in two ways: to the academic community and to the reading public. I have attempted to make this distinction viable in the process-product model, but there are gatekeepers of innovation in the textbook universe (Thompson, 1984b). Thus there exists a wide gap between the "reality" of academic research and the "ideal" of an informative textbook. Colleges and universities suffer when poorly educated students apply for admission. How can this negative feedback loop be corrected? Perhaps we should heed Bierstedt's suggestion (made more than three decades ago) that "if textbook standards are to be raised it may be necessary to raise the academic rewards for writing them" (Cronbach and Bierstedt, p. 125). This may, in fact, be the critical point in the whole system where the real impediment to textbook improvement lies. We must address the possibility that myopic views in academe need corrective theoretical lenses in order to produce a changed text environment that rewards innovation and discourages censorship.

Why Write a Textbook?

Given the negative status accorded textbook writers, what could possibly motivate a textbook author? Money? Unless an author negotiates in advance, there will be no payment until the text is sold. After the sale, there is a lag in payment as long as a year. How many people wait three to five years to be paid if they are motivated by money? Textbook authors may have to accept delayed gratification as one of the realities of textbook authorship. In my own case, I write both as a home economist and as a feminist. My role model for textbook writing is Catherine Beecher, author of the *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841), acknowledged to have been the first textbook in Home Economics. Beecher was the first to lay out the systematic knowledge essential for success in the private sphere as other texts laid out the systematic knowledge essential for success in the public sphere (Thompson, 1984a, p. 183).

Having gained considerable tacit knowledge during my years as a textbook editor prior to entering academic life, textbook writing appeared to me both a creative and an intellectual challenge. For example, the textbook author must possess "state-of-the-art" knowledge of the subject matter which, in the case of Home Economics, draws on the sciences, social sciences, and the humanities. A home economist must stay "on top" of a rapidly proliferating knowledge system in each of the subject matter areas that touch on everyday life. There is much in every discipline of knowledge that touches on the family, child development, food and nutrition, textiles and clothing, and housing and furnishings. Therefore, appropriate information must be selected from a vast stock of knowledge. It must be presented in a way that is appropriate for the state of the art of Home Economics curriculum. It must also take into consideration the

developmental level of the student. This means that language and examples must be appropriate in relation to developmental psychology and to learning theory. In my own case, this means modifying Piaget and Kohlberg with Gilligan and Chodorow and balancing Freud with Jung. In Home Economics, we are concerned with cognitive and affective learning and with skills development. These must be intertwined and evident in the textbook's internal and external teaching apparatus.

Many adoption committees have compliance committees that require readability tests. Thus the author must take into account both readability for the designated grade level and comprehensibility when new ideas are introduced. Then there is the boredom factor! How do you attract and hold the students' interest in an environment where TV and rock music make demands on their attention? Style is important. What can print do that other media cannot? It can arouse the *"Aha!"* response. It can break the boredom barrier that obstructs the learner's progress. The *"Aha!* response can only enter when convoluted and patronizing language is avoided and a new idea or new information shines through. When successful, the student responds internally with something like, *"Aha,* I didn't know that! I'm glad I know it now." This stems from my own experience as a learner. As a reflective practitioner of the textbook craft, I recall that textbooks appealed to me when I learned something new (and even surprising) from them. In writing, that sometimes means resorting to a cliché -- if that spot in the text may be the first time the student confronts the "conventional wisdom" encapsulated in taken-for-granted language. The *"Aha!"* response is something like a light going on or a baloon floating over one's head with the words, "I didn't know that!" written in it.

Graphics represent a vast horizon for the text's potential appeal. In recommending illustrations, the author must ask what ideas need to be reinforced. How can ideas be illustrated? How should captions be written? By whom? Should pictures be literal? Or should they evoke some type of symbolic meaning? With graphs, line drawings, cartoons, or photographs? Color or black and white? Conferences with editors refine these ideas and "midwife" the final product into the world. The complexity and intricacy of this information processing system is not -- to my mind -- well reflected in current research and textbook scholarship. The textbook is too often viewed purely as product without a grasp of the multiplicity of processes involved in its creation. It cannot be conveyed by cause-effect research models. From tacit knowledge, a systems model is more appropriate. And this has been confirmed from recent tacit experience. The author does not write in a vacuum but in a complex social environment which is constantly changing. He/she does not react with a "kneejerk response" to market forces, either. There is a time factor in cultural change, and some phenomena are relatively short-term and subject to other correctives in the system as a whole.

Textbook Writing: A Unique Mission

To a creative writer, whose aim is to communicate a private vision to a broader public, the vocation of authorship represents one kind of mission. Pulitzer Prize winner William Styron has said that, "A writer can't change the world, but he can change an individual, you can alter an individual's consciousness through writing" (interview, *Newsweek,* 28 January, 1980, p. 66). As a textbook writer, my goal is both an altered consciousness and behavioral change. Awareness and action appear inextricably related. By both theorizing and writing about the textbook genre, I derive satisfaction

from transmitting the knowledge system of Home Economics to a new generation. Home Economics provides a comprehensive vision of the knowledge needed for everyday life in an ever-changing world. Each learning area in Home Economics involves value judgments on the part of the author that are (hopefully) transmitted to the learner. At the same time, the author must respect the structures of the disciplines from which subject matter is derived. Making a "seamless web" of knowledge from different disciplines represents a tremendous intellectual challenge. Organizing state-of-the-art knowledge around the perennial problems of everyday life has become for me the ultimate epistemological adventure and one that is unique in the Home Economics discipline.

Steering between the Scylla of textbook adoption committees and the Charybdis of textbook critics is no task for the meek in today's textbook world. Almost two decades before his textbook *History of a Free People* was listed among the textbooks banned in Tennessee, historian/textbook author Henry Bragdon said, "The superior man knows what is right; the inferior man knows what will sell" (p. 293). With but a minor change in gender, I would have to concur in Bragdon's statement.

Table 1

A TAXONOMY OF THE PEER AND SATELLITE SYSTEMS
IN THE ECOLOGY OF EDUCATION

Systems Orientation	Primary Purpose	Inputs	Processes	Primary Environment	Outputs
FAMILY	Producing & protecting human capital over the life cycle	Resources (including knowledge) needed to maintain itself	Nurturing, socializing, supporting family members	HOME	Individuals capable of perpetuating the species; citizens, workers, consumers of education and educators
GOVERNMENT	Maintaining stable group life through social controls	Constitution; laws,* demands of competing interest groups	Legislating, regulating, administering, adjudicating, funding	PUBLIC	Laws,* regulations; judicial decisions; policies that mediate among the systems; protection of intellectual property and civil rights
KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION	Identifying significant problems for study	Past knowledge, intelligence, imagination, creativity	Hypothesizing, experimenting, researching, creating new knowledge, theory-building	ACADEME and BUSINESS "R & D"	New knowledge or refinements and reinterpretations of old knowledge; systematized and classified knowledge in conceptual frameworks; new paradigms
KNOWLEDGE DISTRIBUTION	Diffusing outputs of knowledge production system, usually for profit	Demands for knowledge, information; data from various systems	Acquiring, packaging, and marketing knowledge and information	PRIVATE ENTERPRISE	Media and materials for instruction, TEXTBOOKS
KNOWLEDGE DELIVERY	Transmitting knowledge, instructing, training, preparing for social and vocational needs	Personal and social goals for acquiring knowledge, TEXTBOOKS	Making curriculum; selecting materials, allocating resources for education	SCHOOL AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS	Learners with specialized knowledge, training, skills
SATELLITE	Monitoring system outputs and processes; representing special groups	Outputs of the other systems	Reporting, monitoring, protesting, censoring	THE SYSTEM AT LARGE	Feedback into the system; pressure for change

*Note outputs return to the system that produced them as feedback/inputs.

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